

PERFORMING STATISTICS

#ARTASEVIDENCE

BY: C (14 YEARS OLD), CH (17 YEARS OLD), O (16 YEARS OLD), S (16 YEARS OLD), SID (18 YEARS OLD)



**LIFT US UP!
DON'T PUSH
US OUT!
KEEP OUR FAMILIES TOGETHER**



BY C (14 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What does this mean to you? Do you agree? Do you agree with suspension? What are alternatives to suspension? How could suspension lead to a teen ending up in the juvenile justice system? Why is it important for students to stay in school?

“I wanna be
an astronomer,
but down
here I have
to stand
on the toilet
just to see
a few stars.”

- O, 16 years old

WWW.PERFORMINGSTATISTICS.ORG

#PRISONSDONTWORK

BY O (16 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What does O's statement make you think about?

If prisons don't work, what would help keep youth free instead?



#PRISONSDONTWORK

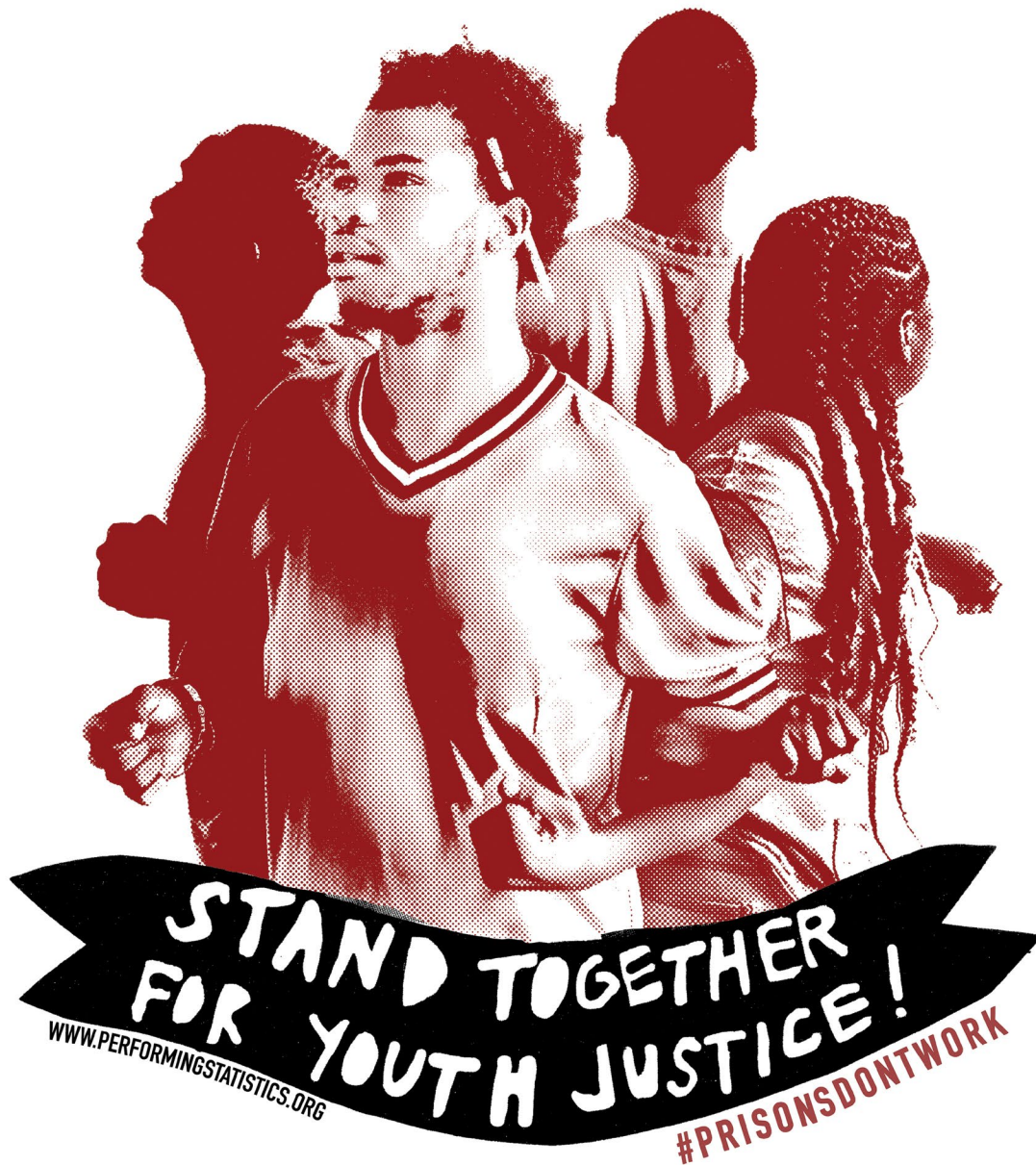
WWW.PERFORMINGSTATISTICS.ORG

BY O (16 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What do you see in the image? How do you think isolation and separation impacts young children (youth can be incarcerated from ages 8 - 17 years old)? Why is it important that youth are part of the effort to end the school-to-prison pipeline? What can youth do to end the school-to-prison pipeline?

WE ARE THE FUTURE



STAND TOGETHER
FOR YOUTH JUSTICE!

WWW.PERFORMINGSTATISTICS.ORG

#PRISONSdontwork

BY S (17 YEARS OLD), 2018

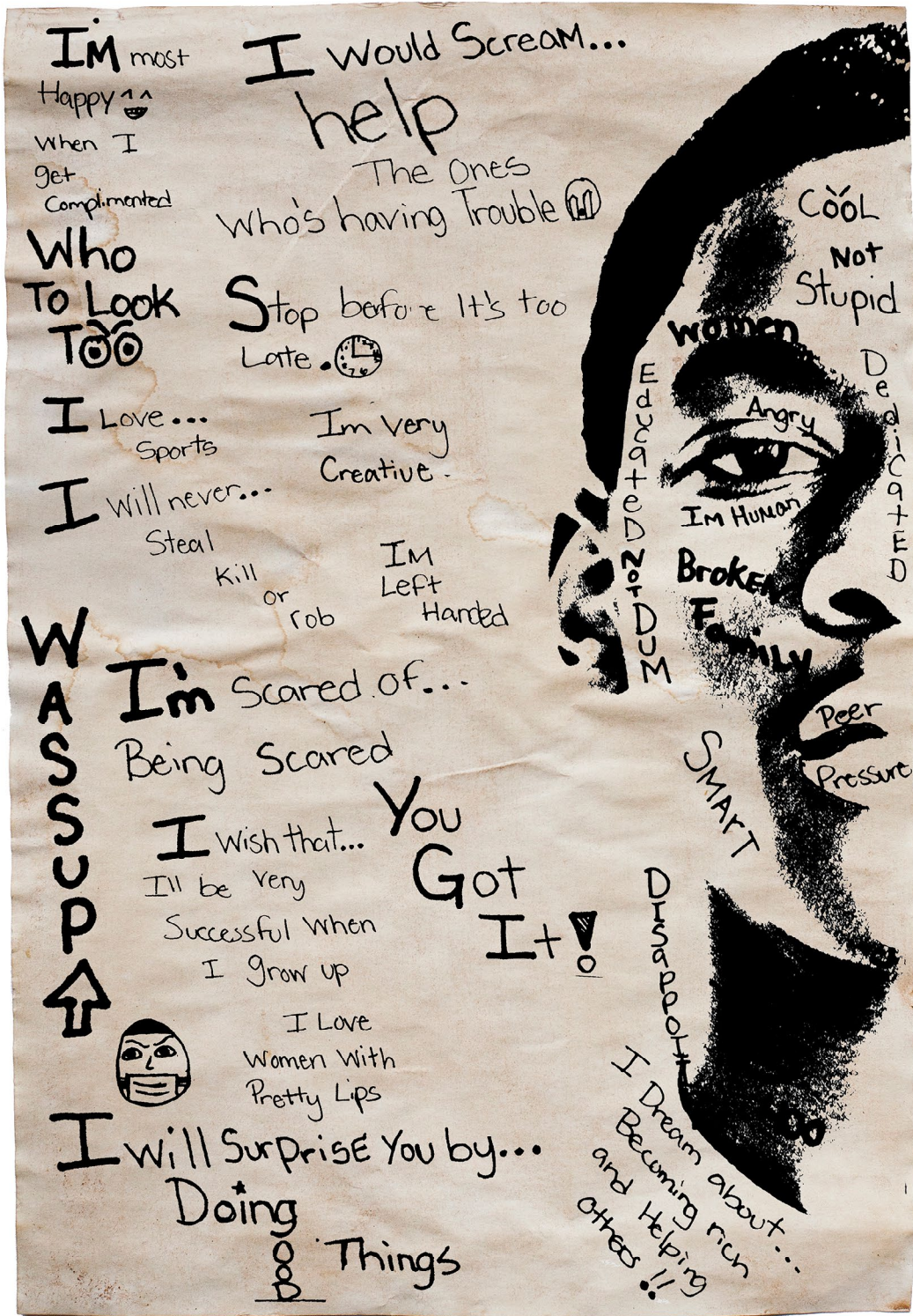
REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When you hear the word jail or prison what images come to mind?

How does this image differ? What words come to mind when you see these teens?

Why is it important that youth are part of the effort to end the school-to-prison pipeline?

What can youth do to end the school-to-prison pipeline?



BY T (16 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When you hear the word jail or prison what images come to mind?

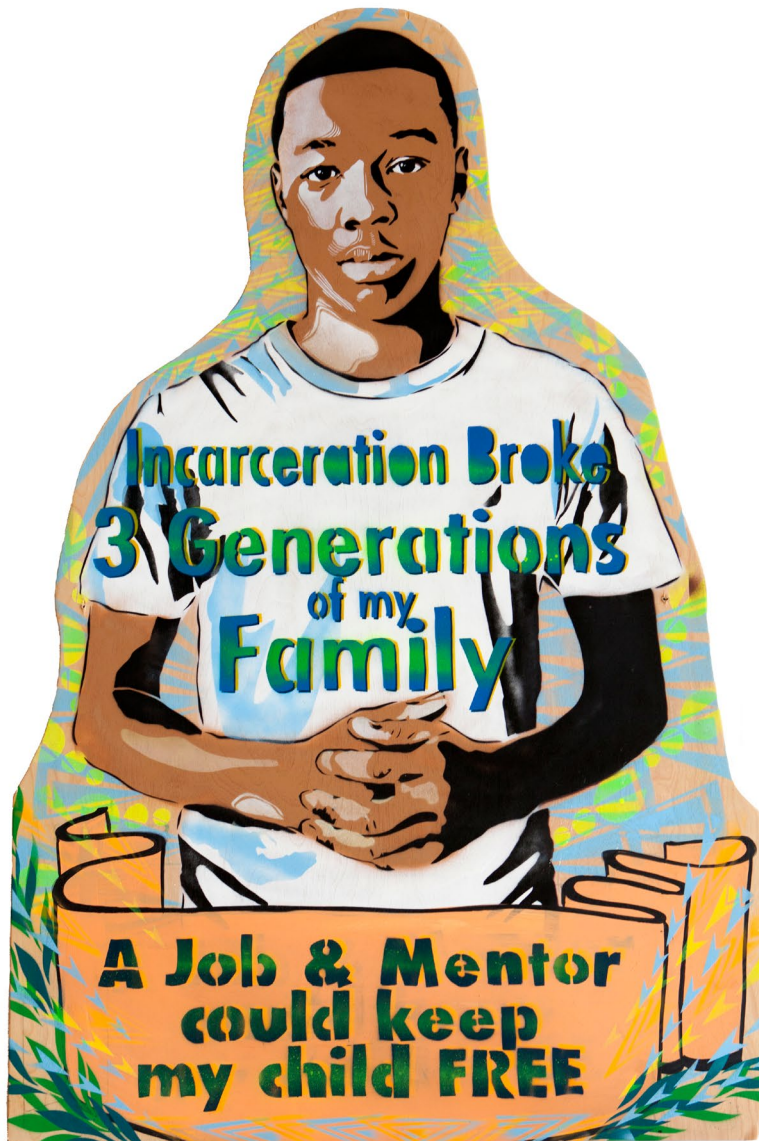
How does this image differ?

Find 5 things in this image that challenge stereotypes about incarcerated youth.

Why is it important that youth are telling their own stories?

MOBILE MURALS

SPRAY PAINTED PORTRAITS
MADE IN COLLABORATION
WITH ARTIST KATE DECICCIO



**#PRISONSDONTWORK
#PERFORMINGSTATISTICS**

BY D (16 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

How might having a parent in prison impact a young person?

How could society support youth without parental support stay safe, free, and whole?



BY S (16 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What does this mean to you? Do you agree?

Do you agree with suspension? What are alternatives to suspension?

Do you have school staff, teachers, adults or peers that you can trust and help you in school?



BY O (16 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

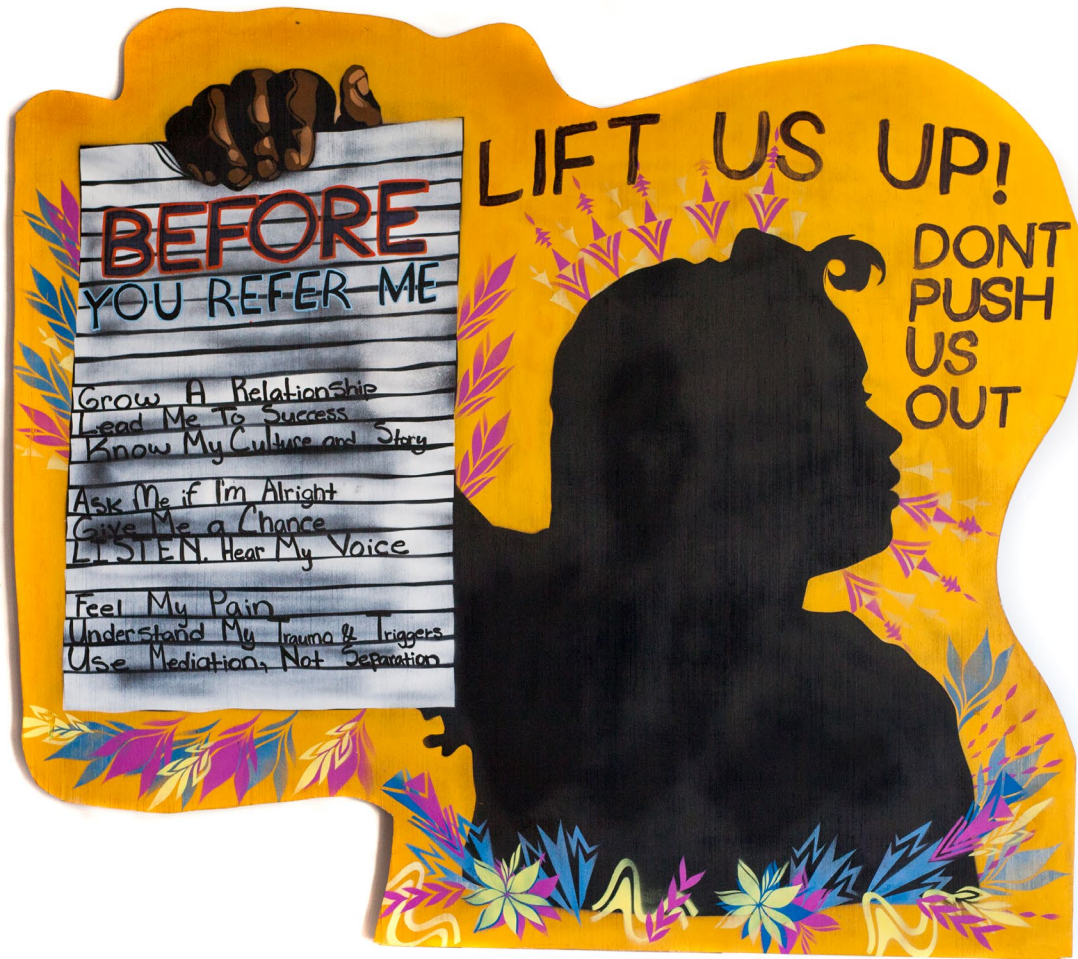
What does this mean to you?

Do you have school staff, teachers, adults or peers that you can trust and help you in school?

How can adults / mentors who have “been in your shoes” better support you?

Did you know that many schools don’t allow people with criminal records to work there?

How might people with criminal records be some of the best people to mentor other teens?



BY C (14 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Read C's demands (Before you refer me...).

Which one do you connect with most? Why?

Why are these important things for adults in schools to do? How could your school make these part of your school?



BY C (17 YEARS OLD), 2018

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What do you think C means by "I shouldn't have to choose?" Do you agree?

Why is it important for students to stay in school?

How could schools change to make them more helpful to teens in C's position?

POETRY

TO LISTEN TO THIS POEM OR WATCH A VIDEO SET TO THE TEXT OF THIS POEM, SEE BELOW FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO ACCESS.

STEP INTO MY CELL...

All day I see

4 white walls
steel toilets and a brick slab
bugs everywhere
Nothing.

It smells like a football locker room all day long
like
shit,
piss,
sweat,
chemicals & fear in the air

It's loud and quiet at the same time

I can hear the person next to me pissing
There's echo's, yelling, screaming, and banging
the same people tell you what to do every day
Buzzers & sirens constantly going off
keys and crying
monkeys jumping out high trees
people screaming in the middle of the night.
nothing.

At night I feel the cold air around me

The bugs crawling on me
the hard slab of a mat they call a bed
The walls sniffing on the back of your neck
The dirty sheet
Hopelessness
anger
pain
Sad not being able to wake up and see my mom,
my sister,
anyone

I live my day

Inside one room
I stare at the bricks
at a metal door
Out a small window you can't even reach or look out

I'm always on alert,
thinking about my next moves
constantly analyzing for threats
I'm closed in a closet,
counting bricks and killing bugs
Searching for freedom

If you've never been here, you might think it would be
Crazy,
a jungle,
easy,
loud and happy,
like what you've seen on TV

But it's A zoo,
a spider,
a daycare center,
boring
Hard and unreal,
Far worse than what you imagined
like the end of the world,
A waste

Close your eyes and know that...

You're going to wake back up.
But you ain't going home,
I haven't seen my family for 7 months
I can't eat when I want to,
I can't sleep peaceful without waking up through the night
And I don't feel safe

But I still wake back up
I'm going to be a strong black man
I'm going to be great

**If I could block out all the sounds of my cell,
I would want to hear nothing but...**
my mom and my sister talking with me
Laughter,
My dogs barking
my daughter say my name
The sounds of joy and happiness
the world around me

I just want to feel
the sun on my skin
A hug from my sister
The comfort of the people I love
my bed, any real bed,
the ground when I walk around
my mind
my legs
any emotion that can be exploited
free

Before you leave, make sure you
Remember me
never forget this feeling
imagine your own kid or family member being in here
thank god you're gone
Try and forget what you've had to become in order to survive

Remember this is not a game
But that I can be successful

THAT I'M NEVER COMING BACK

THAT I AM HUMAN

DO YOU HAVE ACCESS TO WIFI IN YOUR CLASSROOM

➤ Your students can listen to a recording of the audio here:

➤ <https://soundcloud.com/performingstatistics/welcome-to-my-jungle>

➤ A video version of this poem can also be seen in documentary film here:

➤ www.vimeo.com/performingstatistics/keepyouthfree

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What does this poem mean to you? What does it make you think and feel?

Choose the line that was most powerful, why did you choose it, explain?

Why is it important that youth are telling their own stories?

When I close my eyes, I see myself in detention
I see myself dreaming
I see myself free

If you were me, you would know
That I'm scared of sharks
That I am not a criminal
That I love being outside
That I'm scared of losing my mom
That I fear I will be nothing
That I struggle with math
That I am not a thug
That I am scared of God

WE

Home is just another project to some.
But to me,
It's where my family is
It smells like fresh air
Like shit
Pain
Piss
But feels like home
Home... Home.

If you were me, you would know
That I dream of the world
That I want to be BIG
That I'm not any angry person
even though I like angry music
That I want to go out like a soldier

If my voice were heard, I would say
That I'm determined, but I need an education
That I want to succeed
That there's always beauty in the struggle

I would tell you to listen
To see that I matter because I am somebody
Because I am black
Because the system is taking my life

Because I am human.



*Written by teens from the Richmond
Juvenile Detention Center, Summer 2016*

To access audio versions of the poems, download the app BLIPPAR, scan phone over image of poem above and a recording of teens in the Performing Statistics program will begin playing. If the app can't be downloaded, you can access the audio at this link:

www.soundcloud.com/performingstatistics/wearehuman

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When you hear the word criminal, what words come to mind? How does this poem challenge those stereotypes? What does this poem mean to you? What does it make you think and feel?

What surprised you about the poem?

Choose the line that was most powerful, why did you choose it, explain?

I AM

I live a lifestyle that nobody knows
People shooting guns
With the light from the sun
Where I'm from we don't have a sky or
Enough high school graduates
I was surrounded by potheads
But realized they were just kids like me

In and out of these brick walls
But light is all I want to see
Just because I'm from the bricks doesn't
Mean I don't fit in college getting a degree
I am smarter than you think

I am sixteen,
Fifteen,
Fourteen years old
I am not a criminal
I am not an animal
I am powerful

POWER

When I was growing up, my neighborhood
Sounded like police sirens
Smelled like old piss and felt like a place
With no hope

But it shouldn't be where you are from
But where you want to be
Give me freedom and I bet I'll succeed


If I had a superpower,
It would be to save people from dying
To take my mom's cancer away

If justice transformed, I would be doing
Work instead of time.
You'd hear me say
We need freedom for unity
You'd see what I did
As an outlet instead of a crime
Teach me math, science, reading,
And language arts
Believe that I am powerful
And I will become something one day

I am outspoken and I can not be broken
I will not be ashamed of who I am

Believe me, I am powerful.

FUL



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www.soundcloud.com/performingstatistics/iampowerful

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When you hear the word criminal, what words come to mind? How does this poem challenge those stereotypes? What surprised you about the poem?

Choose the line that was most powerful, why did you choose it, explain?

DOCUMENTARY FILM

KEEPING US FREE



LINK TO FILM

www.vimeo.com/performingstatistics/keepyouthfree

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When you hear the word jail or prison what images come to mind?

How does this film differ? After watching the film, what scene stood out the most to you?

Why (describe)? Why is it important that youth are part of the effort to end the school-to-prison pipeline?

What can youth do to end the school-to-prison pipeline?